DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 111 073 95 EA 007 442

AUTHOR	Goldman, Paul; Gregory, Sundra
TITLE	SPECS in South Lane: Teacher Responses.
INSTITUTION	Oregon Univ., Eugene. Center for Educational Policy and Management.
SPONS AGENCY	National Inst. of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Aug 75
NOTE	26p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS	*Educational Accountability; Educational Administration; Educational Innovation; Elementary Secondary Education; *Experimental Programs; *Management Systems; Program Evaluation; Program Planning; *School Surveys; Tables (Data); *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS	*Planning Programming Budgeting System; PPBS; School Planning Evaluation Communication System; SPECS

ABSTRACT

Planning Program Budgeting Systems (PPBS) rest on the assumption that decision-making and resource allocation can be managed more efficiently when information about educational processes is collected uniformly and aggregated systematically. The School Planning Evaluation and Communication System (SPECS) conforms to this conception of PPBS as a purposive managerial system. Although the primary purpose of the SPECS project in South Lane School District was developmental, a limited study of teacher attitudes was carried out in each of the first three years of implementation. Both informal discussion with teachers and survey results showed the existence of three groups: those who were strongly pro-SPECS (approximately 45-50 percent), those who were strongly anti-SPECS (approximately 25-40 percent), and those who were apparently indifferent (approximately 15-25 percent). With one exception, there was little real change in teachers' perception of SPECS-related problems between 1971 and 1973. Furthermore, there was little change in teachers' views of SPECS' impact on organization, supervision, and administrative receptiveness within the district. (Author/JG)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED111073

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRO
DUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM
THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION O RIGIN
ATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS
STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRE
SENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

SPECS IN SOUTH LANE: TEACHER RESPONSES

Paul Goldman, Research Associate
Sundra Gregory, Graduate Research Assistant

Center for Educational Policy and Management
University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403

August 1975

EA 007 442

SPECS is one of five research and development programs currently underway at the Center for Educational Policy and Management and is supported in part by funds from the National Institute of Education. Any opinions expressed in this report, however, do not necessarily reflect those of CEPM, nor do they necessarily represent the policies or positions of the National Institute of Education. No official endorsement should be inferred from either source. Any inquiries regarding SPECS should be directed to Center for Educational Policy and Management, 1472 Kincaid, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403.

I. PPBS in Schools: The Issues

From 1971 to 1973 the School Planning, Evaluation, and Communication System (SPECS) was pilot tested in South Lane School District, Cottage Grove, Oregon. SPECS, a planning-programming-budgeting system (PPBS) tailored specifically for public school needs, was developed at the University of Oregon's Center for Educational Policy and Management (CEPM) and parts of the system are currently being implemented in ten small and medium-sized school districts in seven states. The following report outlines some of the theoretical issues raised by the institution of PPBS in schools, presents a brief description of the South Lane pilot test, and reports findings from a survey of teachers in that school district.

PPBS in publicly financed organizations has resulted from the shared desire of elected officials and citizens to have a more complete picture both of how tax dollars are spent and what those dollars buy in terms of public services. It represents an effort to increase the *accountability* of government agencies to the taxpaying public and elected representatives. The press to apply accountability systems such as PPBS has been extended to public education--as of 1975, over thirty state legislatures had mandated such systems for the future. This pressure stems from two primary factors: the heavy burden education places on state and local taxes and the nature of teaching where faculty members perform their duties in a semi-individualized fashion without tight coordination or supervision.

PPBS rests on the assumption that decision-making and resource allocation can be managed most efficiently when information about educational

processes is collected uniformly and aggregated systematically. The strategy of standardized measurement is tied closely to a set of organizational objectives established by a variety of mechanisms against which actual performance can be measured and costed. Most PPB Systems (within and outside education) contain procedures for carrying out the following organizational functions:

(1) defining organizational goals
(2) identifying specific programs presumed to serve these goals
(3) specifying the objectives for each program
(4) recording information about intended objectives and actual accomplishments, and disseminating this information
(5) planning future activity through the comparison of intentions with accomplishments
(6) measuring input factors in terms of precise monetary costs
(7) evaluating alternatives in terms of least-cost maximization of objectives

SPECS conforms to this conception of PPBS as a *purposive managerial system* and incorporates two additional elements particularly relevant to schools. The first is a high reliance on teacher preparation of planning and evaluation documents. This extends the accounting stage of the system beyond the administrative office into the classroom. The extent to which teachers should and could prepare such documents proved to be a source of controversy and will be discussed below. The second element is a procedure to determine *community goals* for the local school system, followed by attempts to match these goals with the actual measured outputs of student performance. This component raises important issues for the relationship of the school to the community but was only partially implemented in South Lane and can not be given the attention it deserves in this report.

Proponents of educational PPBS, including the developers of SPECS, share the assumption that educational decision-making is best served by

the systematic collection of data based on the relationship of performance to pre-specified objectives. Moreover, a rationalized information system can improve communications with the school's clientele, thus facilitating discussions with parents, creating a favorable atmosphere for school bond elections, and meeting the legal and quasi-legal requirements set forth by legislatures and state boards of education. (It is worth noting that according to a report issued by the State Department of Education, South Lane is ahead of most Oregon districts in meeting the new state standards for program definition and budgeting.)*

Proponents of PPBS argue that it is a particularly useful method for carrying out the budgetary process. Within a school district, cost accounting enables board members and district staff to set and evaluate instructional priorities and to decide the fate of various programs in a rational manner. In the area of instruction, grade level and cross-grade planning can be coordinated if teachers are explicit about their teaching objectives, the methods by which they attempt to meet those objectives, and about measurements of the success or failure of their efforts. Curricula consonant with both student needs and existing teacher practices can then be developed. In short, supporters of PPBS focus their attention on the potential benefits of systematic accountability programs.

Critics of PPBS in education emphasize both tangible and intangible costs. They cite the time-consuming and often repetitious work involved in information gathering and the consequent lack of time that remains for more task-oriented activities. They claim that PPBS is not capable of measuring the "opportunity costs" of PPBS as opposed to traditional methods

---

*Oregon Board of Education Task Force. *A Study of the South Lane School District Educational Management System.* William Bear, Chariman, 1974.

of planning and budgeting. More important, it is unclear how the provision of information necessarily leads to changes in programs or priorities. Administrators find it difficult to develop the means of *utilizing* the masses of information provided by teachers. Some teachers fear that the institution of PPBS may reduce their traditional classroom autonomy and lead, indirectly, to invidious comparisons and to the imposition of "merit pay." Thus, opponents are disproportionately situated among the teaching staff (just as proponents come primarily from administration); they see PPBS as a means of increasing the administration's power at their expense. At the same time, teachers are concerned that the rigidities imposed by such programs overemphasize easily measurable aspects of the educational process and under-emphasize those aspects of classroom life--spontaneity, individual growth, classroom interaction--that distinguish good teaching from bad. Finally, from a normative point of view, there are those who suggest that the value both sustained in education and imparted to its students is integrity, something not easily reduced to quantitative formulae.

The issue of PPBS in schools raises important questions for the direction of public education during a period of increased public scrutiny and concern. The values discussed in the preceding paragraphs will no doubt be debated, and perhaps struggled over, for years to come, and they will involve all sectors of the educational community. In fact, these very issues, pro and con, were continually raised in South Lane. At the same time, PPBS has other organizational consequences, which are the particular province of the sociology of educational organization. Most new programs

in schools have been concerned with pedagogic issues such as instruction in skill areas, open classroom techniques, and educating the disadvantaged. The institution of accountability systems into the schools signifies a departure from the general trend of educational innovation in that its basic thrust is towards administration rather than instruction.

PPBS and similar systems represent an effort to further *bureaucratize* the school through the institution of formal modes of documentation that are both more numerous and more standardized than those typically existing in schools. We do not use the terms bureacracy or bureaucratization in the negative sense implying red tape, paperwork, and inefficiency. Rather we mean by it the existence of formal rules and procedures that are applied equally to everyone and involve an emphasis on using written records that are accessible and comprehensible to all who have need to examine them.

A considerable literature, however, suggests that increased bureaucratization will have noticeable organizational consequences, some of them, in fact, negative. This will be especially likely when bureaucratic demands interfere with the sense of professional autonomy that has become a part of most teachers' self-definition and self-esteem. Similarly, some studies have found that work satisfaction may decrease and organizational conflict increase when bureaucratization is increased in schools. Teachers, however, do differ in their reactions to bureaucratized procedures. Some prefer them and find that they can best function in situations where expectations are clearly defined and specified in written form. Others dislike and resist bureaucratization of procedures, not because of an irrational preference for chaos rather than order, but because they are reacting to the potentially

altered school power structure and the widening gap between school decision-makers and the teaching faculty, a process that appears to be associated with increased school bureaucratization.

A second related issue raised by the introduction of PPBS in schools concerns the acceptance of, or resistance to, change on the part of teachers and the long term process by which innovations such as SPECS might become institutionalized and routinized. SPECS, and PPBS generally, has two characteristics which make it particularly susceptible to teacher resistance. First, because it speaks more directly to administrative than pedagogic needs (its potential for improving instruction notwithstanding), it will generally be initiated by administrators rather than by teachers. Second, the nature of PPBS rests on an assumption that the system eventually will become all-encompassing and involuntary for teachers. This situation is particularly sensitive if teachers have been given little say in the decision to institute PPBS or in planning the implementation of the new program. Furthermore, if administrators are not sensitive to the new difficulties teachers might have in applying PPBS, and if they do not establish feedback mechanisms that allow for the recognition and correction of problems, teachers may actively resist the program. Resistance to change, however, is generally a short-term phenomenon. Over a period of time, an innovation is either discarded or accepted, even by those originally resistant to it. And, organizational turnover tends to result in a growing proportion of staff members who have not personally experienced either the pre-innovation setting or the problems of transition.

II. SPECS in South Lane: A Brief History

South Lane School District is in Cottage Grove, a town of six-thousand people located in Oregon's Willamette Valley. It is twenty miles south of Eugene, the home of the University of Oregon. The district's 3500 students are drawn from both the town and the surrounding agricultural areas and are taught in the district's seven elementary schools (or school complexes), one junior high, and one high school, by a district faculty of 180 teachers.

The initial implementation of a SPECS pilot project in South Lane resulted from a complementarity of needs between the developers who wanted the opportunity to simulate PPBS in a small school district and the local South Lane superintendent who had been looking for a PPBS-type program to install in the district and had previously informed his board of these intentions. After a summer workshop at the University of Oregon, the superintendent decided to implement the system (then called DEPS: Data-based Educational Planning System) and, in the fall of 1970, presented this decision and introduced SPECS to a district-wide meeting on the first in-service day of the academic year. In October, SPECS was discussed at the school board meeting and a letter of intent, committing both the district and CEPM to jointly develop the program over a three-year period, was signed. It is noteworthy that district teachers had not been involved in the process by which the decision to adopt SPECS was made.

During that fall and winter, the developers held an extensive series of workshops with twenty-five members of the district staff to develop the formats for instructional planning. This group, consisting of teachers

and principals, had previously been working together as a district curriculum committee; they became the Program Planning Leaders for SPECS. In effect they operated as a steering committee for the program and as disseminators of ideas and materials. During the spring, district teachers were asked to use the SPECS format in planning a single instructional *unit* (for example, multiplication tables) and then to try it out in their classes. During the late spring and summer, they were to plan a single, one-year *course* to be implemented during the 1971-72 academic year, and by the following summer (1972) they were to revise that course and prepare a second course for the 1972-73 year. During this time, the assigned Program Planning Leaders had grown beyond the original twenty-five and now consisted only of teachers. By the spring of 1972, they began to receive released time for SPECS-related activities.

By 1972-73, a four-page "Program Summary Document" was used universally to summarize goals, activities, and results over the course of a year. The more specific five-page "Planning and Evaluation Document" (PED) was intended by the developers to have considerable flexibility and, in fact, twelve different types were prepared so that teachers could fit the documentation to their specific needs. The Center staff's view of how to use PEDs apparently was not shared by district administrators in the field, many of whom stipulated the specific forms teachers were to use. This compounded the resentment many teachers had felt when SPECS was instituted and, as the three year pilot project neared completion, led them to express their views in a systematic fashion through the South Lane Education Association (SLEA). Their reaction escalated when a promised report on teacher attitudes

had not been delivered to them by CEPM.*

Their first effort was the distribution of a questionnaire about SPECS to district teachers. With the results of this survey in hand (findings were not conclusive but did indicate that a large minority was strongly opposed to SPECS and that a majority had serious criticisms of the program), they made a presentation to the Board in June, 1973, asking for a reconsideration or modification of SPECS. The Board tabled this request and made no response to the teachers for several months. At this time the SLEA made contact with their state headquarters and, through them asked for an investigation by the State Board of Education. This investigation was carried out during January, 1974, and resulted in a report that listed both favorable and unfavorable aspects of SPECS in South Lane. While the investigating committee was clearly favorable to SPECS as a way to address unresolved problems plaguing districts in the state, it did recognize that SPECS itself had generated new problems. Thus, they recommended that the program be consolidated at its present level, and that no further expansion should occur until all currently mandated changes had been implemented to the satisfaction of both teachers and administrators (Oregon Board of Education Task Force, 1974). In practice this meant that teachers would continue to use current Program Summaries and PEDs for the courses already covered by them, but would not be asked to expand their SPECS-related efforts beyond those courses or to a new set of documents.

---

*At the end of each of the three years of the pilot project, two former staff members of the Center, independent of the SPECS developers, administered a questionnaire on SPECS to staff in South Lane. A cumulative three year report was promised to South Lane by fall 1973, but was never completed. The authors of this report, neither of whom was involved in that initial data collection, have attempted to fulfill those original promises. (See Section III.)

Particular attention was given to applying SPECS to non-skill areas where teachers had experienced difficulty. At this writing (Spring, 1975) the moratorium is coming to a close but the future of SPECS in South Lane has not yet been decided. To maintain a voice in the upcoming decision, the teachers' association has prepared a second survey, the impact of which is still uncertain.

III. Data from South Lane

Although the primary purpose of the SPECS project in South Lane was developmental, CEPM did commission a limited study of teacher attitudes to be carried out in each of the first three years of implementation. The current authors inherited the data from this study, the analysis of which sheds some light on the issues raised in the first section of this paper. Items from the self-administered questionnaire dealt with attitudes towards SPECS and with the effects the program was having on various aspects of school organization. Response rates varied over the three years, with one hundred returned questionnaires in 1971, 135 in 1972, and 177 in 1973. In 1972 and 1973 teachers were paid to complete the instrument. We assume the data to be relatively reliable since the responses to those questions duplicated on this study and the SLEA study showed almost identical distributions.

The primary purpose of the data analysis is an examination of those opinions related to positive or negative attitudes towards SPECS. We will limit our presentation to fairly simple statistics. Although we will be looking at differences over time, the major emphasis in the discussion

will be on the 1973 data for which the return rate was high. Longitudinal comparisons are tenuous since we have no comparable information about South Lane for the period *prior* to the introduction of SPECS. But, because we do have data for each of the first three years of the project we can examine some trends. We also can make some cross-sectional comparisons between schools, particularly the junior and senior high schools, which number roughly forty teachers each. The prevailing opinion in the district is that SPECS was more rigorously implemented in the junior high than in the high school.*

The data has been summarized in order to make this report as clear as possible. In the original questionnaire there were seven possible reponses to each item, these being presented on a continuum from one to seven. For example, the possible responses to the item "*Do you agree that SPECS will, sooner or later, result in teacher evaluation and/or comparison--perhaps even merit pay?*" were as follows:

strongly agree ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ strongly disagree
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

However, in the data analysis these possible responses to questionnaire items have been collapsed into *three* categories rather than the original seven. Thus, responses 1, 2, and 3 have been coded as "agree," response 4 as "neutral," and responses 5, 6, and 7 as "disagree."

---

*This opinion corresponded to data from a 1973 doctoral dissertation on SPECS in South Lane (Harold E. Walker, *Position in Social Groups and the Degree of Implementation of an Educational Innovation*, University of Oregon.)

IV. Survey Findings and Discussion

Attitudes Towards SPECS

At each point of data collection, teachers held widely divergent attitudes towards the program. Both informal discussion with teachers and survey results showed the existence of three groups: those who were strongly pro-SPECS, those who were strongly anti-SPECS, and those who were apparently indifferent to the system. Table I gives an abbreviated breakdown of responses to two relevant questionnaire items. The first group (the "pro-SPECS" teachers had seemingly integrated the program into their instructional activities without significant difficulty or complaint. The second group (the "anti-SPECS" teachers) was less sanguine about the program although the dictates of occupational prudence had apparently encouraged compliance with SPECS guidelines. It was within this group, constituting between a quarter and a third of the teachers, that anti-SPECS activity through the teachers' association was concentrated. The third group (the "neutrals") included those who took intermediate positions on SPECS, apparently seeing both positive and negative aspects of the program, and seemingly less committed to a position on the program. The items in the questionnaire instrument do not allow us to gauge the *intensity* of feeling, but it appears that the neutral group, being less committed to a position, may have been less active in district debates and conflicts. The continuity of these attitudes over the three-year period of the pilot project will be dealt with in later sections.

TABLE I

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SPECS

		Positive	Neutral	Negative
How would you characterize your attitude toward SPECS?	1971	49%	23%	28%
	1972	49	18	33
	1973	45	13	42
		Agree	**Neutral**	**Disagree**
SPECS has resulted in benefits to me which justify the time it requires.	1973	29	12	59

It should be noted that there was more consensus on the costs and benefits of the program than is indicated in Table I. About two thirds of the teachers, when asked to identify the best attribute of SPECS, agreed the major benefit was the impetus it gave teachers to become better organized and more explicit about their objectives and procedures. At the same time, some sixty percent of the teachers surveyed felt that, as implemented in South Lane, SPECS required too much paperwork and too much time to be fully effective. Table II provides a summary of the most frequently cited positive and negative aspects of SPECS as seen from the teachers' points of view. We can see that, with one exception, there was little real change in the perception of SPECS-related problems between 1971 and 1973. That exception concerns the amount of time and energy teachers were required to put into the preparation of SPECS materials.

TABLE II

THE "BEST AND "WORST" ASPECTS OF SPECS

Percent of teachers checking:	1971	1972	1973
"BEST"*			
Encourages teachers to organize their planning	39%	49%	37%
Encourages teachers to define explicitly their teaching goals	30	16	20
Encourages evaluation of the quality of instruction	16	13	18
Other	15	22	25
"WORST"**			
Lack of time	20	29	34
Excessive paperwork	8	17	26
SPECS was forced onto teachers	12	8	4
Poor information about what is expected of teachers	9	5	4
It will lead to teacher evaluation	10	5	3
Other	41	36	29
"WHAT CAUSED THE PROBLEMS WITH SPECS?"***			
Lack of time	21	19	27
Teacher resentment because they weren't consulted at early stages	23	28	21
Misuse of SPECS by administrators	7	2	6
Community antagonism	10	10	4
Lack of understanding of SPECS by teachers	14	10	4
Other	25	31	38

As the questionnaire was set up, teachers checked only *one* response to each of the three items.

*Items coded as other include "it will help pass budgets," "will be of value to classes which are skill oriented," "the quality of instruction will improve," "will lead to standardization of instruction," and "stimulates interaction among teachers."

**Items coded as other include "will cost too much money," "a preoccupation with percentages," "impossibility of measuring inputs and outputs," "difficulty in applying to real situations," "will be misused by administration," "will change nothing," etc.

***Items coded as other include "lack of money," "unwillingness of teachers to categorize activities," "administrators not allowing teachers to use plan outlined," "parents unhappy about time students out of school," "staff not feeling involved in decision-making aspect," "still in experimental stage," "a preoccupation with percentages," etc.

In 1971, only twenty-eight percent of the teachers felt that the worst problem with SPECS would be the time or paperwork required. After two years experience with the program, however, that figure jumped to sixty percent, which was a substantial change. On the other hand, teachers became less concerned about both teacher evaluation and the way in which decisions were made to adopt and implement SPECS.

Professional Concerns

A second set of responses, to items asking teachers their opinions about long-term consequences of SPECS to teachers' professional status, disclosed a concern that professional prerogatives might be adversely affected by the program. Over forty percent of the teachers felt that teacher professionalism was not enhanced by SPECS. Even on these questions a substantial number of teachers held essentially neutral positions as Table III indicates.

The findings suggest that there is a concern among some teachers that SPECS will infringe on their conception of the amount of influence teachers should have in formulating school policy and instructional strategies in their classrooms. Whether these concerns are justified cannot be ascertained from the data and may require a longer-term analysis. These feelings are, however, consistent with other studies of teacher reaction to new forms of bureaucratization whether or not they are associated with PPBS.

TABLE III

SPECS AND THE PROFESSIONAL ROLE OF TEACHERS

		Agree	Neutral	Disagree*
*SPECS gives teachers significant autonomy in deriving teaching goals and measurement strategies.**	1971	51%	20%	30%
	1972	52	21	28
	1973	47	18	34
The sense of "professionalism" among teachers is enhanced by a SPECS system.	1971	43	19	38
	1972	35	24	41
	1973	32	21	47
Teacher associations such as NEA should support SPECS as it allows the teacher to take a larger role in the decision-making process.	1971	27	34	39
	1972	20	35	46
	1973	22	29	49
SPECS will sooner or later result in teacher evaluation and/or comparison, perhaps even merit pay.	1972	67	24	8
	1973	61	20	19

*This item is double-paralleled and ambiguous.

The Effects of SPECS on School Organization

A crucial question about SPECS, or PPBS generally, is the long-term effects it may have on school organization once the problems of development and implementation have been solved. We can only speculate about the direction of such changes in South Lane, since by 1973 the system had not become routinized or freed from controversy. Decision-making and supervisory processes and curriculum content could not be substantially changed under such circumstances and, in any case, real changes would only show up after a period of years. Moreover, the lack of pre-SPECS data on South Lane makes comparisons especially difficult. Table IV does

report on the evolution of teachers' perceptions of administrative receptivity, decentralization of decision-making, the closeness of supervision, and curriculum changes during the life span of the SPECS pilot project. What is noticeable about responses to questions on these issues is the relative stability of attitudes over the three-year period. Even with marked disagreement within the district on the merits of the program, SPECS seems to have had little effect on district organization, supervision, and administrative receptiveness.

TABLE IV

CHANGES RESULTING FROM SPECS

		very receptive	receptive	unreceptive
How receptive do you feel the school administration is to the ideas of teachers?	1971	26%	46%	28%
	1972	12	64	24
	1973	26	53	21
		agree	**neutral**	**disagree**
Do you agree that decision-making will become more decentralized with teachers taking a larger role?	1971	23%	32%	44%
	1972	16	22	61
	1973	21	23	56
		closely	**loosely**	**not at all**
In general, how closely are your instructional activities supervised and/or evaluated?	1972	30%	67%	3%
	1973	29	68	3
		agree	**neutral**	**disagree**
Do you agree that the curriculum of the Cottage Grove system will be altered or affected by the introduction of SPECS?	1971	59%	22%	19%
	1972	66	16	19
	1973	65	14	21

Differences between the High School and the Junior High

In the previous paragraphs we have discussed individual attitudes towards SPECS. In this section we will examine differences in attitudes as they derive from circumstances peculiar to two of the schools in South Lane. We have chosen to look at differences between the high school and the junior high for three reasons: first, they are significantly larger than the elementary schools with each having more than forty teachers on the staff (most of the elementary schools have less than ten teachers); second, they have some basic similarities in their departmental organization; and third, they differ markedly in the ways in which SPECS has been implemented. The junior high SPECS implementation went beyond district guidelines in the use of planning documents. The high school was more typical of the district as a whole; teachers there tended to meet rather than exceed minimum district requirements.

Junior high teachers were far more favorable to SPECS than their colleagues in the senior high; they tended to feel that SPECS was an encouragement, not a barrier, to professional autonomy. The differences between teachers in the two schools can be seen in Table V. Moreover, while high school teachers constituted a large proportion of the SLEA committees acting in opposition to SPECS, many junior high teachers did not agree with the direction of those activities.

The findings show striking differences between two schools in the same district exposed to the same innovation at the same time. Contrasting opinions about SPECS seem to have developed at each of the two schools during the years of the project. These opinions did *not* carry across school

building lines partially because of their reinforcement on a day-to-day basis in each school.

TABLE V

HIGH SCHOOL AND JUNIOR HIGH TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SPECS (1973 Data)

	High School Average	Junior High Average
*Attitude toward SPECS**	4.98	3.43
SPECS resulted in benefits justifying costs	4.36	3.5[illegible]
SPECS gives significant autonomy	4.26	3.60
Professionalism is enhanced by SPECS	5.40	3.93
Decision-making is more decentralized	5.33	4.41
NEA should support SPECS	5.37	4.50

*Each item was answered on a seven-point scale with 1 = very positive (or strongly agree) and 7 = very negative (or strongly disagree).

Problems of Routinization

Innovations, if they survive, usually become routinized after affected individuals have made personal (and the organization, institutional) adaptations to them. Attitudes soften and the earlier period of conflict becomes a more distant memory as routine work goes on. This pattern did not really apply in South Lane for a number of reasons. The district's commitment to SPECS was originally experimental and had an initial three-year time limit, with the expectation that continuation would be based on

past results. This left those teachers who were unhappy with SPECS with the possibility of mounting a new effort to have the program rejected at the end of that period. The upcoming decision on the direction SPECS would take in South Lane resulted in a new staking out of opposing positions.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that teacher attitudes did not change markedly over the first three years of the program, as we saw in Table I. If anything, feelings toward the program were less favorable, although movement was slight and reflected some disappointment that the innovation did not live up to expectations.

One factor that usually helps the change process apparently did not materialize in South Lane. Despite some teacher turnover, new teachers apparently did not seem particularly favorable to SPECS. We would have anticipated that new teachers would be insulated from past organizational disputes and would be more adaptable to submitting to the organizational routine of a new job.*

Long term resistance to SPECS continued, we think, because it represents an innovation that strikes at the heart of some teachers' professional self-concepts. For these teachers, PPBS threatens to violate long-term norms and values that cannot be easily changed by an administrative mandate or by the frequent practice of completing a set of routine documents. Thus, it is quite possible that conflict over the program could continue for some time in the future. SPECS has already become a candidate

---

*New teachers may, however, have had less extensive training for implementing SPECS than those who were in the district when SPECS was introduced.

for being a potential negotiable item in collective bargaining. Despite the stress generated by SPECS, however, teachers and administrators have attempted to carry out the dispute with a minimum of personalization and a maximum of attention to the value issues involved. Our impression is that disagreements over the program did not appear to affect overall teacher satisfaction with the district. One anti-SPECS teacher remarked to us that South Lane was still a pleasant and far better than average place to teach.

Summary and Conclusions

It is difficult to draw generalizations from the results of a pilot project in one relatively small district but the data presented above does suggest some tentative points that should be raised in concluding this report. These should not be taken as a reflection on either the teachers or administrators in South Lane but, rather, as an indication of possible ways in which other districts might implement SPECS or similar PPBS programs elsewhere.

1. *SPECS divided teacher opinion in South Lane and might be expected to do so in many, if not most, school districts.* Proponents of the system might consider spending extra time and energy overcoming teachers' fears of and resistence to such programs or, alternatively, might pilot test the program primarily among those teachers/schools where initial reception is favorable.

2. *SPECS required too much routine paperwork for the average teacher to complete without affecting her/his other duties.* A district implementing the program could mitigate this problem by either reducing the required forms to their minimum essentials or providing enough release time for teachers to master and complete the forms.

3. *Attitudes towards SPECS changed little during the three year pilot period.* This suggests that a district implementing it should have at least yearly assessment of progress and problems

and, if still committed to the program, must give special attention to the needs and problems of teachers who dislike the program.

4. *It is not clear whether SPECS is primarily an administrative or a teacher planning system.* Those teachers who perceived SPECS to be an administrative mechanism giving supervisors material for evaluating teacher performance and for centralizing district decisions felt that it eroded their sense of teacher professionalism and disliked the program. Those teachers who saw SPECS as being a mechanism whereby they could improve their individual planning and grade level curriculum tended to like it. A district implementing SPECS can go in either or both directions but, it should be *clear* and *specific* as ... the ultimate uses of the program so that staff can operate from a set of concrete expectations with a minimum of misunderstanding.

In concluding we should note that accountability programs will be slowly integrated into our schools in coming years, although most will not be quite as sudden a jump as in South Lane. State administrative mandates demand more and more precise information from schools, resulting in more systematic data gathering and aggregation, at least on the administrative level. These developments bear watching because of the potential conflict of interest between administrators' and teachers' professional norms and the likely vigorous entry of the latter's unions and professional associations into the debate. Some large questions remain unanswered by SPECS in particular and PPBS in general: Do accountability systems really result in improved educational quality or are they mainly administrative mechanisms? Will their implementation result in raised or lowered teacher morale, and, if so, what consequences will that have?

Further Reading

Corwin, Ronald G. *Militant Professionalism: A Study of Organizational Conflict in High Schools*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970.

Gross, Neal, Joseph Giaquinta, and Marilyn Bernstein. *Implementing Organizational Innovations: A Sociological Analysis of Planned Change*. New York: Basic Books, 1971.

Hills, Jean. "On Accountability in Education." *Educational Administration Quarterly*, X (1974), 1-17.

Kirst, Michael. "The Rise and Fall of PPBS in California." *Phi Delta Kappan*, LVI (1975), 535-538.

Levin, Henry M. "A Conceptual Framework for Accountability in Education." *School Review*, (1974), 363-391.

Lortie, Dan C. "The Balance of Control and Autonomy in Elementary School Teaching." *The Semi-Professions and Their Organization*. Amatai Etzioni, ed. New York: The Free Press, 1969.

Nagle, John M. and Harold E. Walker. *SPECS: What It Is and What It Does*. University of Oregon: Center for Educational Policy and Management, 1975.

Oregon Board of Education Task Force. *A Study of the South Lane School District Educational Management System*. William Bear, Chairman. Available through the State Department of Education, 1974.

Walker, Harold E. *Position in Social Groups and the Degree of Implementation of an Educational Innovation*, University of Oregon, 1973. [Dissertation abstract]